GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:522
ANSWERED ON:17.07.2002
PRISONERS OF WAR
KAILASH MEGHWAL

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officers and soldiers of Indian Armed Forces languishing in jails of Pakistan, Bangladesh and other countries as prisoners of war and the time of their imprisonment;

(b) the efforts made at different levels for their release;

(c) the number of officers and soldiers of Indian Armed Forces registered as missing and the time thereof togetherwith the details of action taken at different levels to find out the missing officers and soldiers; and

(d) the assistance provided to India by International Redcross Society and other agencies in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a), (b), (c) & (d) : Sir, there are 54 Indian Defence Personnel believed to be in Pakistani jails missing since Indo-Pakistan war in 1971. Government has consistently taken up the issue of release and repatriation of these missing defence personnel with the Government of Pakistan at all levels including at the level of Prime Minister.The Government of Pakistan has, however, never acknowledged their presence in its custody. Government would continue to take up the issue with Pakistan Government to secure the release and repatriation of missing Indian Defence Personnel.Assistance from any third party was never sought by the Government in view of its policy to resolve all matters with Pakistan bilaterally.